

a tulip by any other name (or something along those lines) by thenewromantics

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Summary:

when el is awoken by tapping on her window in the middle of the night, she has absolutely no idea what to expect but what she gets is far better then she could have ever imagined.

aka mike wheeler is the biggest sap on the face of the planet and el is in love.

a tulip by any other name (or something along those lines)

Author's Note:

i've this idea swimming in my head for a couple of weeks now and i finally buckled down and wrote it. it's not very long, but i'm happy with it and i hope you guys all like it!!

warnings for totally tooth rotting fluff, seriously, this is schmoopy and fluffy and i have zero regrets.

The night was clear and calm, stars scattered across the dark blue sky and the moon high and bright in the sky, illuminating the grass. The air was still, a rarity for early November, despite the chill that came along with this time of year.

This is why it surprised, and confused El, when she was woken up by a tapping noise on her window. At first she thought it could be rain, sometimes during heavy rainstorms the rain was loud and abrasive against her window. But, there hadn't been a cloud in the sky just an hour earlier when she had been looking up at the night sky.

As the initial haziness faded, and she saw that she had only been sleeping for an hour, she started hearing other noises alongside the tapping. A shuffling of feet, the synthetic sound of a windbreaker brushing against itself and the tell tale sound of rocks clacking together. It all made sense now.

Someone was throwing rocks at her window.

El knew who it *probably* was, very few people in her life would come over to her house at eleven thirty at night and start throwing rocks at her window, but she still moved with slight apprehension as she slipped out of bed. Things had been quiet for several months now, any threats were long gone, or dead, but El couldn't help but approach situations like this carefully.

However, her hesitation quickly vanished as a new sound joined in

the clacking, shuffling and tapping. The next rock missed her window, smacking against the outside shingles, a solid *thud* vibrating softly through her bedroom. She snorts.

“Shit!” The familiar expression is faint, and El can only smirk as she crosses the small distance from where she stands to her bedroom window. Flicking the lock with her powers, she slowly raises the window, she barely dodges another rock that sails past her head and falls to the floor by her feet unceremoniously.

She laughs as she sticks her head out and spots Mike. He’s standing below her window, one hand over his eye and a couple of pebbles gripped in the other. He doesn’t notice her at first, his vision no doubt compromised because of the hand over his eye, but once he does, the remaining pebbles in his hand fall to the ground.

“El!” He exclaims, sounding almost surprised to see her. It’s not like he had been standing under her window throwing rocks for the last however many minutes. “You’re awake!”

A breathy laugh escapes her lips. “You’re throwing rocks at my window, Mike. Did you expect me to sleep through it?” Under the bright moonlight, she sees him blush. He almost glows under the blue of the night sky and she swears he’s never looked prettier.

“Still...” She shakes her head and smiles. He’s such a weirdo.

“Mike, what are you doing here?” She asks after a minute or so of silence. Mike snaps out of whatever trance he seems to be in and blushes again.

“Right, sorry.” He clears his throat. “I got distracted by how pretty you are.”

El can’t help but roll her eyes. But she also can’t help the blush that creeps onto her cheeks. He might tell her that she’s pretty every single day, but she doesn’t think she’ll ever tire, or get used to, hearing it.

“You’re such a nerd.” She says affectionately. Mike smirks and the sight is only made more humorous by his hand clamped over his eye.

She has a hunch over what happened, but she has to hear it from him. “Mike.”

“Yes?”

“What happened to your eye?”

He blushes again, this time the redness overtaking his entire face and most of the stretch of skin she can see on his neck and collarbone. His eyes (well, eye) fall to the ground, his weight shifting from one foot to the other before he defiantly squares his shoulders and looks back up at her. Her eyebrows raise.

“It’s not important.”

“Hmmm.” She hums. She realizes that he never answered her first question and that she still, for all intents and purposes, still has no idea what he’s doing here. She’s not complaining by any means, but despite the odd nature of their relationship, at least according to their friends who call them weird every other day, he’s never shown up throwing rocks at her window in the middle of the night. “Mike.”

“Yes, dear.”

That’s a new one.

“Mike, darling.” He blushes, playfully rolling his one good eye. They aren’t usually one for pet names, but sometimes they’re necessarily when it comes to good naturedly teasing each other. “What are you doing here?”

It’s almost like her asking him again reminds him that this isn’t a normal occurrence between them and there was a reason he was here in the first place. He takes a sharp breath and shakes his head slightly.

“Oh! Right!” El giggles.

There’s another beat of silence and El can see Mike squaring his shoulders and taking a deep breath. He drops his hand from his eye, his right eye staying squinted shut, the area around it slightly red. Certainly not the cutest he’s ever looked, but El can hardly complain.

She thinks maybe she's lost him again but then he's clearing his throat. "But soft! What light through yonder window breaks?"

Whatever El was expecting to come out of Mike's mouth, this was certainly not it. She can't help the way her mouth falls open slightly, her heart speeding up his rhythmic beating in her chest.

"It is the...um West? And Juliet, well El, is the sun!" Ok so it's not the most perfect rendition of Shakespeare, but it's not the worst she's ever heard. She feels a grin spread across her face as Mike continues.

"Arise, fair sun and kill the envious moon, who is already sick and um, pale with grief. I think..." Mike trails before going silent, a look of deep thought crossing his face. "Oh right! That thou her maid is far more pretty, no! Shit! Far more fair than she."

El giggles through Mike's struggles, a blush covering her cheeks. She can't help but wonder what brought this on from him, though. She doesn't think him, or any of their friends, are reading Romeo & Juliet in english class, so it's not there was any real reason for him to be thinking about it. Then it hits her.

Sixteen Candles.

Months ago, right before El had turned sixteen, her and Mike had watched Sixteen Candles in his basement, alternating between talking through the parts they didn't care about and El 'aww-ing' through the romantic parts and Mike grinning at her. When the movie had concluded El had made an off handed comment about how cute and romantic she thought the ending scene was.

This of course had led to a conversation between the two of them about romantic gestures, during which El had mentioned that despite the down right depressing ending to Romeo & Juliet, she found Romeo's monologues outside Juliet's window to be incredibly romantic.

Now here he was.

She had hardly expected him to remember that comment. She certainly hadn't been trying to hint at anything, but as always, he

went above and beyond any of her expectations, and she was feeling quite lucky and wouldn't trade any of it for the world.

Even if this meant that he was reciting Shakespeare, quite badly she might add, outside her window in the middle of the night.

"It is my lady, oh is my love!" Somewhere between the beginning of this monologue and now, Mike's voice had escalated from a slightly above average volume speaking voice to a near shout, but El hardly cared. "Oh that she knew she were, or something like that."

El laughs, a deep and full laugh that has Mike grinning. Almost as if he's prompted by El's response, he takes a couple of steps forward until he's directly below her window.

"She speaks, but she doesn't say anything." She's almost certain that not only is he missing words and misremembering the order of them all, but he's even adding some of his own. "Um, a little help El."

With a smirk and a shake of her head, El gives a slight flick of her chin and moments later Mike is drifting through the air. She stops him when he's right in front of her, one of his hands finding the windowsill and the other coming up to cup her cheek.

Up close she can see that his eye is beginning to swell, but he doesn't seem to be bothered by it anymore. Either that, or he just doesn't care. Her heart beats with nothing but love for him all the same.

"Oh that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek." His voice is soft and El bites her lip, bashful. The way he's looking at her, even if it might only be with one eye, is leaving her breathless.

"I think you might have skipped some lines." She whispers. She had meant for the comment to be teasing but with how he's looking at her and the feel of his hand against her cheek, she's only capable of sounding absolutely enamored.

Mike grins, moving his hand from her cheek to push himself over the ledge and into her bedroom. His feet thud against her bedroom floor and as soon as he's found himself on solid ground, his hands are in

her hair and his lips are only inches from hers.

“She speaks, oh, speak again bright angel.” Butterflies are fluttering in El’s stomach as Mike’s breath tickles her lips.

“You are such a dork.” She breathes out, her hands clasping themselves behind Mike’s neck. He can only grin before closing the minuscule gap between them and pressing his lips to hers.

It’s a position they’ve been in hundreds of times, his lips against hers, her hands around his neck and his threaded through his hair, but every time feels like the first time with him. It hits her then, after his badly recited Shakespeare and rock induced eye injury, just how much she loves him. She feels it from the top of her head to the tips of her toes.

When their lips naturally separate, El is out of breath and the familiar dazed expression that always seems to take over Mike’s features after they kiss is in full form. She smiles.

“I love you.” She whispers, basking in the softness of the moment.

However the moment is broken up seconds later before Mike can respond with a knock on her door. Mike and El break apart, jumping away from each other like the other is on fire. It’s not that El is embarrassed to be kissing her boyfriend while her dad is home, but it is the middle of the night after all.

Hop doesn’t wait for any kind of response from either of them before he’s pushing her bedroom door open, his arms coming to cross in front of her chest when he’s got a good look at them.

El does her best to keep a straight face, but Mike looks so terrified it almost makes her laugh. Over the last couple of years Hop and Mike have formed what she could only consider almost a father and son kind of relationship, but she doubts that means Hop would allow Mike in her room so late at night.

“Hey dad.” She finally says, breaking the silence. “You figured out Mike was here, I’m guessing.”

Hop snorts and Mike is so pale El’s almost afraid he’ll vomit, but he

keeps it together, refusing to look away from her father.

“I’d be a pretty shitty cop if I couldn’t figure this one out wouldn’t I?” There’s an ever so slight raise of his eyebrows and El sighs. “Besides Wheeler’s pontifications of undying love were so loud I’m surprised half the neighborhood wasn’t yelling at him to shut up.”

El spots Mike blushing and he finally breaks eye contact with Hop to embarrassingly eye El’s bedroom floor instead. While she feels like comforting him, she has to admit her dad does has a little bit of a point.

“Not that they weren’t admirable kid, but you gotta learn to be a little more subtle.” At this Mike skeptically looks Hop in the eye and she certainly doesn’t blame him for it. Hop is usually nothing but affectionately teasing at the nature of Mike and El’s relationship so hearing him call Mike’s romantic actions admirable, even sarcastically, is rare.

It’s then when Hop finally gets a good look at Mike, the swelling in his eye having only increased in the last ten or so minutes. His demeanor shifts, going into the familiar protective father mode that he tends to take on whenever El, or Mike (and usually Will, too) are hurt or in any kind of danger.

“Jeez kid, what the hell happened to your eye?” Mike blushes, shifting back and forth on his feet embarrassingly before shrugging.

“There was a um..rock.” He gestures to the window as if that explains everything and Hop can only raise his eyebrows as El resists a laugh that’s bubbling in her throat. As painful as the swelling is starting to look and concerned as she is, it is still *kind of* funny.

Her boyfriend just might be the most uncoordinated person on the planet, that’s for sure.

“Alright, I get the picture.” Hop dismisses the issue with a hand gesture before sighing. “Why don’t you follow me, Mike so I can get you some ice and then I’ll drive you home. Not that I don’t want to listen to anymore Romeo and Juliet this evening, but you and El have school tomorrow where you’ll be welcome to continue.”

Mike can only nod, looking somewhere between confused that he didn't get some kind of lecture about sneaking into her room and relieved for the very same reason. El laughs as her dad leaves the room, no doubt giving them a moment to say goodbye.

"I guess I'll, um, see you tomorrow." Mike says, taking a small step closer to her. El nods, closing the distance between them with a few steps and quickly pressing a kiss to his lips.

Mike gives her a moony eyed grin and that earlier bubble of love and happiness returns. She knows they can't stay here forever and her dad is waiting but right now it's just the two of them and that's all that matters.

"I love you." She says again, it's only been about six, maybe seven, minutes since the last time she said it but she could say it a million times every second and it would never be enough times.

"I love you too." He whispers, giving her another small kiss before reluctantly pulling away. She doesn't want him too, and she can tell by the way his hands squeeze hers that he doesn't want to either but they both know they have to. Her dad is downstairs and they have to be up for school in mere hours.

She watches him with a smile on her face as he exits her bedroom, almost running into the doorframe with his impaired vision. El can only shake her head with a small laugh.

How she got so lucky she'll never know. With the way her heart is fluttering in her chest and the smile refuses to leave her face, she doesn't think she'll ever stop feeling this way about him.

And that's totally fine by her.

Author's Note:

thanks for reading! i hope y'all enjoyed it! lemme know what you think! <3